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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 001147

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SUBJECT: CHAVEZ GIVES OBAMA AFRICAN PRIDE ADVICE

REF: A. CARACAS 1059

[1](#)B. 2008 CARACAS 409

Classified By: Political Counselor Robin D. Meyer
for Reason 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, on a September 1 state visit to Libya to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Qadhafi's revolution, urged President Obama to "rise to the height of his African blood," adding that although he may have good ideas, his hands are tied by the "North American empire." One of Chavez, goals during his two-week tour of Africa, the Middle East, and Europe is to get Head of State commitments to attend the Summit on Africa and South America that Chavez is hosting on the Venezuelan island of Margarita on September 26-27, dates that would facilitate participation by Heads of State attending the United Nations General Assembly. He succeeded in getting Qadhafi's commitment to attend. With his courtship of African leaders Chavez is clearly looking to tilt this summit toward his anti-American rhetoric. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) During a September 1 State visit to Libya to celebrate Qadhafi's 40th anniversary in power, Chavez praised Qadhafi's revolution as "properly socialist" and put him in the pantheon of leaders like Nasser, Machel, Nyerere and Castro. Chavez added that the African Union, like the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), formed part of "a new geo-political map" of a multipolar world. During the visit, Chavez acknowledged Obama had "lots of good ideas" despite being "bound to a North American empire." Chavez hoped that Obama would "rise to the height of his African blood" and "defeat the empire." In Tripoli, Chavez expressed his worry that if Obama "tried to defeat the empire, God forbid, they could kill him."

[1](#)3. (SBU) Chavez's two-week tour includes Algeria, Syria, Iran, Belarus and Russia as well as Libya. One of his goals is to secure the commitment of Heads of State to attend the September 26-27 AU-UNASUR Summit in Venezuela. He had recently sent Eduardo Buria as a special envoy to Africa in part to spur interest and support for this Summit. On his current trip, Chavez has so far secured the commitment of Qadhafi to attend the Summit and is likely to obtain that of Algerian President Bouteflicka, especially considering that Caracas hosts one of the few Polisario embassies in the world.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: The September 26-27 timing of the African-South American Summit will likely maximize the participation of South American and African leaders in Venezuela as they proceed to the United Nations General Assembly. The planning for this Summit has been described by

post's contacts as disorganized (ref A). With the courtship of African leaders, Chavez is likely trying to tilt this Summit toward adopting some of his anti-American rhetoric.
End Comment.
DUDDY